



EVERY DAY IN EVERY WAY

USDA's Cultural Transformation Action Items

- LEADERSHIP
- RECRUITMENT & RETENTION
- TALENT MANAGEMENT
- EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT
- CUSTOMER FOCUS & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

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MyUSDA

A Progress Report for Employees on USDA's Cultural Transformation

Volume 5, Issue 10

September 2015

USDA Celebrates Women's Equality Day

By Diane Gardin, US Forest Service

USDA recognized Women's Equality Day last month with presentations and activities at the Jefferson

Auditorium in Washington, DC. The observance of Women's Equality Day commemorates the 1920 ratification of the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote. The day calls attention to women's continuing efforts to achieve full equality. Presenters were welcomed by Secretary Thomas Vilsack. An estimated 250 employees attended in-person, and more than 200 others participated virtually.

Presenters, pictured below, included Ms. Jennifer Yezak, Chief of Staff, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration; Dr. Karlease Kelly, Provost Virtual University; Dr. Gregory L. Parham, Assistant Secretary for Administration; Dr. Marsha Coleman-Adebayo with the no Fear Coalition (keynote speaker); Mr. Stedman Graham, Stedman Graham & Associates; Montez Ashley, Acting Diversity and Inclusion Program Manager, Federal Women's Program. Em-



Upcoming USDA Special Observance VETERANS DAY PROGRAM

Tuesday, October 27, 2015 at 10:00 am at the Jefferson Auditorium.

Employees receive one hour of diversity training for attending USDA Special Observances. You can view recordings of recent [USDA Special Observances by visiting here.](#)

USDA Marks National Day of Service Through Gleaning

By Jennifer McDowell, National Feds Feed Families Leader

On September 11, 2015, USDA participated in the National Day of Service to honor the memory of September 11th, 2001. USDA employees, led by Assistant Secretary for Administration Dr. Gregory Parham (pictured right in the foreground), visited a food warehouse in Cheltenham, Maryland, as well as surrounding fields.

Those who gleaned in the warehouse spent time selecting, sorting and scrubbing white potatoes, while those who gleaned outside in the fields helped harvest collard greens. It was a successful effort for all involved, garnering many pounds of nutritious, healthy food that will be appreciated in the coming months.

It was a unique way to mark the anniversary of 9/11, allowing USDA employees to give back to a great cause while participating in an event that helped honor the memory of those lost.



Giving Back Through Gleaning

By Susan Siemietkowski, Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services

of USDA Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services (FNCS) employees have given their time to glean at farms in support of the Feds Feed Families campaign. As a result of FNCS' efforts, several thousand pounds of good and nutritious produce have been donated to food banks. Feds Feed Families (FFF) runs through October 2 this year. It was launched in 2009 as part of President Obama's *United We Serve* initiative. It is designed to help food banks and pantries stay stocked during summer months when they traditionally see a decrease in donations and an increase in need. FNCS employees donated just over 47,000 pounds of food last year and hope to exceed that amount in 2015.

One of several groups of FNCS employees from around the United States (pictured right) have been participating in FFF through gleaning.

USDA gleaning efforts have been taking place all over the country. Multiple teams



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*And be sure to visit the
[USDA Cultural Transformation Website](#).*

ERS Speed Shadowing Event Fosters Staff Connections

By Jennifer Bond and Gunner Hamlyn, Economic Research Service

What do you get when you adapt a fast-paced technique for meeting people to the workplace? It's not speed dating; it's Speed Shadowing! For the third consecutive year, more than 40 Economic Research Service staff including administrator Mary Bohman, (pictured foreground on the left) participated in an energy-packed Speed Shadowing networking event.



Staff took seats in two rows facing each other. When instructed, pairs began a two minute question and answer session before the clang of a cow bell concluded the round and signaled participants to move one chair to their left. Over the course of an hour each participant spoke with up to 20 individuals about their role at the agency, career aspirations, oddest jobs, and more.

Staff made connections with colleagues from different divisions, floors, and career backgrounds. Smiles and laughter heard around the room were evidence of the fun and frenzied atmosphere; one participant noted, "This is too much fun to miss!"

Feedback showed that 80 percent of participants agreed that the information gleaned during the session was valuable to their professional development.

Sign Up for the USDA Detail Opportunity Registry

By Roderick Mance, Office of Human Resources Management

The [Detail Opportunity Registry](#) provides employees with information on noncompetitive developmental opportunities such as details, rotational, and developmental assignments. This website is one way agencies and supervisors may communicate about detail and career development opportunities. Each Human Resources office ensures that details posted comply with labor-management agreements and comply with regulations and policies for details.

Employees may use the Detail Opportunity Registry to seek developmental opportunities even if no detail opportunity is currently posted. Employees should use the "[Profile and Resume](#)" tab to enter information that will be used in the detail process.

Securing a detail is a great way to broaden skill sets and build networks. The [Detail Opportunity Registry](#) is the primary tool used to share information about details within USDA. For more information on the site, reference the [General User Guide](#). For information on gaining access to post details, contact Roderick Mance at Roderick.mance@dm.usda.gov.

The 2015 [USDA Combined Federal Campaign](#) (CFC) is underway! The CFC is the largest and most successful workplace charitable giving drive in the world. CFC is the only authorized charitable organization solicitation of Federal employees in their workplaces. The campaign is structured to support and to promote philanthropy through a voluntary program that is cost-efficient and effective in providing all Federal employees the opportunity to impact the CFC charitable interest of their choosing.

Forest Service Provides Cultural Awareness Training

By Lupe Rodriguez and Nicole Ebberhart, U.S. Forest Service

The Forest Service Civil Rights DC Service Team recently hosted its 3rd Annual Multicultural event in Albuquerque, New Mexico, with over 50 volunteers and 40 tables representing countries from around the world. The event provided cultural awareness education to more than 1,000 employees from USDA (some of whom are pictured right) along with other local Federal employees.

U.S. Forest Service Special Emphasis Program Managers co-chaired the event, and they used the opportunity to provide information on their respective programs to further diversity and build an even more inclusive workforce.



Engaging Veteran Employees

By Gail Lacey, Rural Development

Recently, Rural Development held two listening sessions to get comments on how the agency can improve the recruitment and retention of Veterans.

Veterans shared that what attracted them to RD was the mission, potential for growth, and alignment with their own goals. The mission of RD was also a factor for Veterans to stay with the Agency, as they believed they were making an impact in rural communities.

Participants provided significant input, positive comments, and suggestions for improvements. Some suggestions included matching Veteran skills with Federal positions, bridging benefits when transitioning to a Federal position, and shared meeting space.

Lance Green, a Veteran and recently hired Diversity and Inclusion Manager, said, “RD’s on-boarding team contacted me as the selected candidate well in advance, which allowed me to “hit the ground running.”

The feedback received will help RD enhance its on-boarding of Veterans and develop recruitment strategies and marketing materials targeted to them.

USDA Managers Learn with “Walking In My Shoes” Technique

By James Brent, Office of Human Resources Management

With busy schedules and competing priorities, most Managers have to juggle. It’s easy to

understand why some have a tendency to manage from behind their desks without venturing out to where much of the work is being accomplished. This potentially isolates the Manager from the work and those that are performing much of it. By using the Walking in My Shoes (WIMS) managerial technique, Managers have a chance to become more aware of the work and better understand the needs of their staff and colleagues. It also provides an important opportunity to establish a connection with employees and receive immediate input and feedback.

For a manager, WIMS improves the lines of communication, makes you an active participant in the engagement of your employees and allows you to proactively address problems and issues before they grow into larger ones. If you want a pulse check on what is happening with your staff, and to build stronger team performance, periodically spend some time where the work is being done.

For more information on the WIMS Program, please contact James.Brent@dm.usda.gov from the Office of Human Resources Management.

USDA—A Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace

By Debra Arnold, Office of Human Resources Management

August is recognized as National Breastfeeding Awareness Month. This year's theme was 'Breastfeeding and Work: Let's Make It Work'. The USDA supports our current and future breastfeeding mothers in the workplace, and we strive to make improvements wherever possible. USDA continues to be recognized as a 'Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace' by the MD/DC Breastfeeding Coalition. Here are a few examples of why:

This year, the Diversity, Recruitment and Work/Life Division, Office of Human Resources Management donated a brand new hospital grade breast pump to the South Building Health Unit's lactation room.

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) added a new nursing mothers room and upgraded an existing room at two different field locations. The Work/Life and Wellness Committee worked with new mothers at the Minneapolis, Minnesota Business Site to open a new, safe and comfortable nursing mother's room. Below is a group picture of the happy, new mothers in the room.



New mothers at the APHIS nursing mothers room in Minneapolis. Back row left to right; Heather Schuldt, Kitty Weeden and Jaime Redmond. Below, a picture of the APHIS nursing mothers room in Riverdale, Maryland.

Employees of the APHIS Work/Life and Wellness Program were approached by several nursing mothers from the Riverdale, Maryland, worksite with concerns about an existing nursing mother's room.

APHIS installed a badge reader on the nursing mother's room door that will allow access only if the badge has been 'keyed' for the room.

A second small refrigerator to accommodate the increased usage of the room and a much needed paper towel dispenser were also added.

The old fabric chairs were replaced by repurposed high back chairs and the unstable room divider was replaced with new floor-length curtains.

These effective collaborations and continued support of our nursing mothers are great examples of why USDA continues to be recognized as a "Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace".



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My disability is **one part** of who I **am**.

At work, it's what people
can do that matters.

**National Disability Employment
Awareness Month —**
Celebrating 70 Years!



OFFICE OF DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT POLICY
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
dol.gov/odep



October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month, when we raise awareness about disability employment issues and celebrate the contributions of America's workers with disabilities. The theme for NDEAM 2015 is "My Disability Is One Part of Who I Am."

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If you'd like to share your feedback about Cultural Transformation, telework, diversity, or any other aspect of work/life at USDA, send an email to:

MyUSDA@dm.usda.gov or visit USDA's [Work/Life and Wellness](#) community website if you have access to [USDA Connections](#).



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If you have ideas for future articles, contact us at MyUSDA@dm.usda.gov

Submit Your Article to MyUSDA

The monthly deadline for submissions is the end of the first week of each month.

Guidance on Submissions to MyUSDA

Submissions to MyUSDA should indicate progress that you, your agency, or your mission area have achieved toward implementing some aspect of the Secretary's Cultural Transformation (CT) Initiative. The ideal submission includes photos or graphics along with a brief description of the event. The ideal word count for articles is 150-200. All submissions are subject to editing and Departmental review.

Submissions may be in the form of a traditional article with a byline, a first-person account, or any work-related activity, event, or observance demonstrating the Secretary's Cultural Transformation Action Items: Leadership; Recruitment & Retention; Talent Management; Employee Development; and, Customer Focus & Community Outreach.

Email submissions or further inquiries to MyUSDA@dm.usda.gov.